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February 15, 2019

Public Testimony for Committee Bill 234: An Act Establishing a PILOT Program for Curbside Food Waste Collection Used in Anaerobic Digesters.

Senator Cohen, Representative DeMicco, Senator Kushner, Representative Gresko, Senator Miner, Representative Harding and distinguished members of the Environment Committee:

My name is Dan Martens and I am Vice President of Novamont North America. Novamont is global leader in biopolymer research and manufacturer headquartered in Novara Italy with North American headquarters in Shelton, CT.

I would like to submit comments and ask you to please support this bill for multi-town curbside collection of food scraps. This simple pilot program is of greater importance than may appear at first pass. It is bio-economic circular theory put into practice here in Connecticut. This program will support sustainable energy, reduce Carbon GHG emissions, amend soils, and advance green technology. By treating food scraps not as *trash* but as a *resource* to replenish our soils via compost, we are simply acting as the Earth would do naturally.

The city of Milan, Italy has a food scrap collection program that exemplifies the gold standard. Their organics capture rate is 240 lbs. per person per year—the highest in Europe with less than 5% contamination. The two largest food waste digesters in the EU are in Italy. They process more than 600,000 annual tons of food scraps each, coming from curbside delivered by tractor trailer in compostable bags from 12 million people—that's about the size of 4 Connecticut.

A state-of-the-art food scrap program involves awareness, tools and commitments made at all levels. Residents recycle food scraps with vented pails and compostable bags, haulers collect these bags of organics from curbside bins, and AD plants tied to composting deliver sustainable energy and soil amendments sold at a profit.

All parts of the food scrap collection program must be easy and unobtrusive to participants. When scraps are collected in a compostable bag with vented pail, the scraps do not smell or collect moisture or soup. In an efficient way households can collect, transfer scraps to curbside without mess. Haulers do not have to handle wet materials and processors can combine bags and scraps with other feedstocks without problems.

Cities from around the world visit Milan to see how it's done. 180 cities have signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. Last year the City of Baltimore was a Policy Pact award winner.

The Milan model was developed with government support and three main partners: AMSA Waste Management Company, the ESTA Foundation Research & Training Center, and Novamont.

Novamont has supported food scrap collection programs throughout the EU, the U.S. and Canada; Notably, the cities of Seattle, San Francisco, New York, greater Boston and Toronto. Novamont is a highly acclaimed award-winning environmental company with sought-after expertise. Also of note is that Novamont North America is a Connecticut company and has been headquartered in Connecticut since 2010.

A frequent comment after seeing Milan's food scrap program, is "well that is great, but it won't work at home." Well, Connecticut is home to Novamont with a direct line to Milan. Let's get started, and not stop until Connecticut is the gold standard for the rest of the country. No shortcuts, no excuses. Why not CT? More importantly, why not now. The world is watching. We can do it. Let's get started.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments for Committee Bill No. 234.

Sincerely and for your consideration,

*Dan Martens*

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